This economic picture indicates that from early childhood, women had engaged in such physical labor that by 18 years of age they had strong muscles and backs through lifting, stooping, and squatting. Since to stop work during pregnancy was construed as laziness, women worked vigorously up to the day of delivery. If a woman were delivered during one of the hectic seasons, she might shorten her post-natal rest to whatever she thought was a safe minimum.

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Marriage

883

As people of the community often met at the temple, at ceremonies, and at work parties, there too young people met. Unmarried girls went freely and often alone on duties about the community, and also to Minburi to sell vegetables or take a load of paddy to the mill. To temple fairs and such they went in groups. Though parents hoped their children would marry within the community, a few young people "married out."

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Girls were married between 17 and 27 or so, most frequently around 21 to 23. Since boys at 21 might have to serve 2 years in the army, and were urged to spend as well at least a few months in the priesthood, their marriages took place between 22 and 30, most often around 24 or so. Parents were in no hurry to marry off their grown children at the very age when their productivity was funneling wealth back into the family. However, if male help in the family were short, parents were more receptive to suitors. No girl was married against her wishes nor to a stranger.[4] Marriages might be arranged through formal conversations opened by the man's family and carried on through a go-between, but the girl had the final say. A secret agreement between the partners might even precede negotiations. About half of the marriages were elopements, sometimes arranged because negotiations were dragging, sometimes to avoid the higher costs of more formal arrangements. Marriage, though largely based on socio-economic factors (Phillips:62) was not devoid of personal esteem. Sharp (Bang Chan data at Cornell) has a note on the desirable qualities in a husband as viewed by women. "Sexual virility," last on the list, was minimized in relation to such qualities as "religiousness," "wealth," "industriousness," which headed the list.

[702] [793] 584 583 581

4. A person who uses magical means to force an unwilling woman's love "will be born 500 times as a mad dog."

[832] [775]

562 789 [754] [787] love philters, and they might be "sealed up" in childbirth or attacked by khun, their capacities to "liang" were inalienable. If any woman tried to tamper with men's magic, a severe sanction fell on her. She became the host of the phī krasū who lived from faeces like a dog.[59] On the other hand in a legendary case a man who tried to perform one of the women's rites to the Rice Mother was destroyed.[60] Furthermore, the Buddhist sanction of sinfulness fell on any man using magic for evil purposes.

562 791 [755] [793] The single channel where women might operate in the men's field of curing, power, clairvoyance, etc. was as a medium (khon song), through possession by a spirit. If possessed by a male mō, she could do everything a mō could do. Men were never mediums. Bang Chan's only medium was possessed by a male mō.[61] During seances she talked and sat like a man, and gave out cures and advice to an eager clientele. Only while wearing the yellow robe of an ordained priest did a man enjoy a generalized eufunction comparable to a woman's nurturing capacity. His powers in many respects were far greater than hers, but limited in her speical province.

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[832] [156] [688] [626] [593] 59. My finding is based on Textor's interesting facts (pp. 305-330). He described the hosts of phī krasū as married women ("never a maiden") in their 30's or 40's, who were "invariably" trying to learn love magic. Such women were, however, violating their sexual function as nurturant and worse, their status as "auk" women, ritually established by the holy fire! Ostracism by the community, implemented by fear of contagion through spittle, lasted even unto the deathbed. The phī krasū's daughter alone was immune while giving the devoted care which was every mother's due in her old age, for Bang Chan desired no alienation of this filial duty even out of fear of the terrible sanction on the mother.

[539] [776] 60. The legend ran that once a man instead of a woman went into the rice field to perform the ritual inviting of the Rice Goddess to stay there and be cared for with food and offerings during her pregnancy. The goddess he met was not an immature and tender child-like spirit, but the adult, pregnant being who was powerful, flirtatious, and frightening. Dazzled by her beauty he fell in love with her, and ran away with her, vanishing forever. The goddess, affronted because an improper person arrived to deal with her, destroyed him.

[825] [787] 61. In Bangkok, monkey, cats, or spirits may also possess women.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

152 571 ritualized, ways of expressing hostility. What is significant about these particular procedures is that their very formalism serves to keep the aggression controlled and within bounds. Thus, everybody knows precisely how to behave when a buffalo disappears in the middle of the night and an intermediary arrives the next day to arrange the price for its return. Similarly, the aggressor, his victim, and everyone else present knows what is meant when someone calls a dog by the name of a person who is within hearing range and claims it was simply a slip of the tongue. The victim might respond by stealing his antagonist's boat and returning it a few weeks later, after his adversary has suffered sufficient anxiety. Note that in all these cases a face-to-face confrontation is either avoided or concealed.

152 571 754 Related to the above is the use of magical aggression. Textor (1960) points out that magical aggression—from one *person* to another *person*—is on the wane in Bang Chan. Also, it is clear from his exhaustive inventory of the magical practices in the village that interpersonal aggression has a very minor part in what is otherwise an extremely elaborate belief and ritual system: there are no more than three or four supernatural "objects," out of more than one hundred and seventy, that even suggest witchcraft, and although these objects are considered highly potent, they are rarely used. Even in the most extreme case—a young man using the oil from the chin of a corpse to induce hysteria in a maiden who has rebuffed his advances[9]—the victim is held partially responsible for having succumbed to the magic, a consideration that diminishes the "magical" implications of the ritual.[10]

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152 762 Finally, a word should be said about the most convoluted way of expressing aggression. This is suicide, a procedure which, obviously, is applicable to only a small number of people. Nevertheless, during the relatively brief period that I was in the field, three Bang Chaners (out of a population of 1,771) attempted to do away with themselves by hanging. They always selected a conspicuous place (a tree on the Minburi highway or over the main canal) and were always unsuccessful. The aggression here is convoluted not only because it is turned inward, but also because it is

[9] This blending of sex and aggression does not have the same meaning in Bang Chan as it has in the West. Although the young man is concerned with punishing the girl for not responding to him, he is more concerned with breaking down her defenses and equilibrium, the very factors which denied him access. In English terminology, he wants to "unhinge" her, with all the duality that such symbolism might imply.

[789] [10] While magical aggression between people is relatively minor, magical means of averting aggression by non-human forces is not. In fact, the largest number of magical practices in Bang Chan relate to protecting the health and welfare of the organism from malevolent spirits, accidents, and dangerous animals. These data, of course, are quite consistent with the SCT data on "anxiety," presented in the preceding section.